

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2976  
By: Guillen  
Youth Health & Safety, Select  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Under current law, there are no education courses relating to firearm safety offered in school districts or open-enrollment charter schools. Texas must be proactive and update current law to create student firearm safety courses detailing accident prevention and protection due to the sheer prevalence of firearms in the state. H.B. 2976 will minimize firearm-related tragedies and accidents through educational material that is made readily available to the public. With this bill, Texas acknowledges the importance of firearm education and the positive effects it will have on the state.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2976 amends the Education Code to require the State Board of Education (SBOE) to develop curriculum guidelines for an elective course on firearms safety for public high school students as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date. The guidelines must meet the following requirements:

- focus on accident prevention;
- promote the safety and protection of students;
- emphasize how students should respond when encountering a firearm; and
- include the information contained in the firearms safety portion of a hunter education course administered by the Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD).

The bill requires the SBOE to develop a virtual course on firearms safety for a public school district or open-enrollment charter school to offer to high school students as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date.

H.B. 2976 authorizes a district or charter school that offers a high school program to offer to high school students the elective course on firearms safety and requires the course to meet curriculum requirements for one-half elective credit. The bill requires the virtual course on firearms safety to be made available to the Texas Education Agency, TPWD, and the Department of Public Safety. The bill requires each agency to make the virtual course on firearms safety available to the public free of charge through the agency's website.

H.B. 2976 applies beginning with the 2024-2025 school year.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2023.